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He would sink on the naked earth. P 60.

THE WRECK AND THE RESCUE.

A

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. HARRISON FAIRFIELD.

WRITTEN CHIEFLY BY HIMSELF.

EDITED AND PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION, BY

ENOCH POND, D. D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, BANGOR.

"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."—MARK 5: 19.

BOSTON:

MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY,

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PREFACE.

Some years previous to his death, the late Rev. Harrison Fairfield prepared a memoir of himself, under an assumed name, in which he detailed faithfully, the circumstances of his early life and conversion; the steps of his fall, his sufferings while a wanderer from God, and the wonderful dealings of God with him in regard to his recovery. He very appropriately entitled his Memoir, "The Wreck and the Rescue;" and he assures us that "in every part and word, it is literally true." His design in it was to magnify the grace of God, and show *the transcendent power of the gospel*:—its power to descend into the lowest depths of human degradation, and to effect the recovery of a ruined soul, when all other expedients had failed.

Circumstances prevented the publication of Mr. Fairfield's Memoir, while he lived; but since his death, it has occurred to many of his friends, that his good design in writing it ought not to be frustrated; that it ought, in some shape, to be given to the world. Accordingly, his papers were put into

my hands some months ago, in the hope that I might be able to revise them, and prepare them for publication.

As Mr. Fairfield is now deceased, there seems to be no longer any reason why the assumed name should be retained. I have ventured, therefore, to drop it, and to substitute his own proper name. It will be seen, however, that the work is in most parts of it, an *autobiography;* though the writer commonly speaks in the third person, he speaks of *himself*, and describes things which no being but himself could have known.

In preparing the work for publication, I have sometimes changed the structure of the sentences, occasionally, I have omitted sentences which seem to be superfluous, and have thrown in others, where the sense or the connection obviously required it. But in no case, has the meaning, the sentiment, been changed. It stands, everywhere, as the author left it.

For the last two chapters, bringing down the memoir to Mr. Fairfield's death, and closing with some additional remarks, the editor is alone responsible.

It is earnestly hoped that the work may engage the attention of many in the younger walks of life, and especially young men. They will here see to what results a course of dissipation surely leads. They will see a living, speaking exemplification of the truth of Scriptures such as these! "Evil men and

seducers wax worse and worse." "The way of transgressors is hard."

I close with the following impressive words of Mr. Fairfield: "And now, dear reader, may God bless this humble effort to the everlasting good of your immortal soul. If you are tempted, take warning. If you have wandered away from Christ, be admonished and encouraged to return. *Great is his mercy.* If it were not so, the subject of this memoir would now be in the world of despair."

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MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

Mr. Fairfield's Birth—His Native Place—His Parents—Mode of Living in the First Settlement of the Town—Care of Providence for the Early Settlers — Mr. Fairfield's Mother — Her Conversion, Character and Influence — His Home described, as it was in his Early Life—Desirable Progress since that period.

THE subject of this Memoir was born in the town of Vassalborough, Kennebec County, Maine, May 23d, 1812. He was the youngest of twelve children. His father was one of the first men in the town in point of intelligence and influence; and though he treated religion, its ministers and ordinances with respect, he was not an experimentally religious man. But his mother was remarkable, not only for deep, fervent piety, but also for uncommon intellectual abilities, and especially for he

knowledge of the holy Scriptures. She removed to Vassalborough, with her parents, from Weymouth, Mass., when only two years old. Her parents were among the earliest settlers of the place.

It may be interesting to pause in our narrative, for a moment, and compare the circumstances of these new settlers, and their manner of life, with those prevailing in similar establishments at the present day.

Now, when a new part of the country is to be broken up, mills are first erected, and a communication with the other settlements is secured. But in the early days of Vassalborough it was not so. Then the roads were mere footpaths, indicated by spotted trees; the saw-mills were an axe and shave; while the grist-mills were no other than samp-mortars.

But the most trying times in the settlement were, not when the people were obliged to pound their grain, but when there was no grain to be pounded. Not

unfrequently were they brought to such straits as these; and had it not been for a most wonderful provision of Divine Providence, by which a supply of food was annually sent to them, they must inevitably have retreated to the other settlements.

This supply was not rained down to them in the shape of manna from heaven; but far away, in the deep, dark ocean, an innumerable multitude of fish, (commonly called herrings or alewives,) had long before been created, and divided into separate families or schools. Two of these schools, differing slightly in size and appearance, would, every spring, seek out the mouth of the Kennebec river, in preference to all the other rivers that empty into the Atlantic, and follow up its channel for sixty miles, passing many streams that discharge themselves into the river, until they arrived at the mouth of Seven Mile Brook, in Vassalborough. Here, one of the two parties would turn off into that

stream, and follow it up to its source — a large pond in the town of Vassalborough; while not one of the other party would stop with them, but would continue up the river, and into the Sebasticook, to supply the wants of the settlers there.

After remaining in the pond for two or three weeks, where they deposited the germs of millions of their species, the herring of Vassalborough would return to the ocean; whither they were followed by their young ones early in the autumn, with naught to guide them but that mysterious instinct which their Creator had given them.

These herrings furnished the inhabitants with an abundance of food. Salted and smoked, they could be kept through the year, in which state they were often given to the cattle. They were also used, as the white fish now are, to enrich the ground.

Into this new and hard settlement, as before remarked, the mother of Harrison

Fairfield came, with her parents, when she was only two years old. Here she grew up to womanhood, became a wife and mother, trained up a large family, and many years ago rested from her labors. Her religious privileges in early life were few and meagre. There was little or no preaching in the town, no religious meetings, and, of course, no Sabbath school. Then her parents, though sober, moral persons, gave no evidence of vital, experimental religion. She had no advantages of school education, though by the assistance of others she learned to read and write. Yet God had marked this lamb of the flock for himself, and when but a child in years, she was made the subject of the Holy Spirit's operations. Indeed, she was powerfully wrought upon. Her convictions of sin were deep, pungent, and thorough, and her deliverance from the power of sin, though long delayed, was clear, decisive and enduring.

As she had no one to explain to her the

way of life, it was natural that, in her distress, she should strive to be saved by the work of her own hands. She labored hard to make herself better; and that she might be as good as she believed her parents to be, she often gathered other children about her, read the Scriptures to them, and talked and prayed with them.

But an oppressive sense of depravity and guilt remained, until, in her distress, she was led to surrender herself entirely into the hands of God. From this time, the promises of the Bible began to be opened to her, and her burden was removed. The Spirit took of the things of Christ and showed them to her, and she was enabled to rejoice in him with a joy unspeakable. Still, she was ignorant of the nature of the change which God had wrought in her, until after some years—indeed, after her marriage. She and her neighbors were visited by a faithful, godly minister of Christ. He was a plain, unlettered man,

but he had good sense, deep piety, and a thorough Christian experience. Under his preaching Mrs. Fairfield came to understand her true position, and to indulge the hope that she had been born again. Her parents also were converted, and an extensive revival of religion followed. A Baptist church was soon after constituted, which remains to this day.

For the next half century, Mrs. Fairfield was an honor to the Saviour, by whose blood she had been redeemed. She diligently and faithfully instructed her children; she prayed with and admonished them; and they all give evidence of having been born again. She was one of the few professing Christians whose entire consecration to the service of God, and whose cheerful though serious temper and deportment, carried into all the relations and duties of life, served to silence the enemies of religion, and to carry unwelcome conviction to their hearts.

Notwithstanding the disadvantages of

her early days, her strong intellect and sterling good sense, raised her quite above, and gave her an influence over, those about her.

"It is with profound veneration," says her grateful son, "that I call to remembrance her many clear and able expositions of difficult portions of Scripture; as also the solution of other difficult questions which I have heard from her lips."

Mr. Fairfield was not one of those spoken of by Solomon, who insist that "the former days were better than these." On the contrary, he thought that there had been great and desirable progress, in education, in religion, and in the circumstances of domestic and social life, within the period of his own recollection.

To illustrate this, he takes us back to his native town, and to his father's house, (which was one of the most considerable in the town,) as they were in his childhood, from thirty-five to forty years ago. It may

interest our young readers to learn, from an eye-witness, what were the appearances and occupations, in and around a respectable farm-house, at that period: —

"As we approach the house—a large one-story building, on which there never was any paint—the most conspicuous object in the yard is a long well-sweep and pole, with the 'moss-covered bucket' pendant. We shall be received with hisses by a large flock of geese, kept chiefly for their feathers. But what will be most likely to arrest our attention among the domestic animals, is the lank, long-legged hog of those days. Contrary to Falstaff, the hog at that period did hold it a sin to be fat, though he thought a good appetite a virtue; and as to his locomotive powers, few were the horses that could distance him in the race.

"What would now be thought, if a hog, fatted and ready to kill, should knock over and half kill the butcher that was intending

to kill him ?—as was sometimes the case in the times of which we speak.

"In the yard of this house we shall see the only wagon in the town, and that but just introduced; and what a clumsy vehicle it is! In one barn we shall see a man breaking flax, and another swingling. From another barn comes the sound of the flail; for threshing machines are not yet invented, and winnowing machines are but just coming into use.

"As we enter the house, we shall see the mother and daughters busily engaged in manufacturing wool and flax into cloth. One is carding tow; another is combing flax; a third, is spinning it on a foot-wheel; while the mother is weaving, and the smaller children are quilling for her. All are busy with their tasks, exhibiting unmistakable marks of comfort and of thrift.

"In one corner of the room stands the old clock, six times as large as the clocks of these days, and costing twelve times as

much. We shall see little about the house indicative of refinement; and if we enter into conversation with the inmates, we shall find that they, though not lacking in native shrewdness and intelligence, are comparatively unlearned.

"Several causes have contributed to make them so. In the first place, in the multitude of domestic employments at that day, young females had little *time* to devote to literary pursuits. Then, the schools were of a very inferior character, and books, beyond the Bible, the primer, and the almanac, were almost unknown. But above all, the preaching, (what there was of it,) was not instructive. Learning, as a qualification for the ministry, was of no account; and a minister, who had been to college and wrote his sermons, would not have been tolerated. Added to all this, the people were comparatively isolated. In the multitude of their avocations, they saw little of each other; and as to going abroad for information or enjoyment, there was almost none of it.

"The man whom we are visiting, (that is, my father,) has been in Boston, and is, on that account, considered rather an extraordinary character. A journey to Boston then took as many weeks as it now does days; and cost as many dollars as it now does dimes. As a consequence of these things, the people generally were very credulous. They were ready to believe whatever any unprincipled straggler was pleased to tell them, and in this way were often imposed upon.

"We may look at the condition of this people for a moment, with regard to the compensation they received for labor. Within the compass of my recollection, the compensation of females has increased, I think, tenfold. It certainly has increased as much as this, if we regard not only the money paid for labor, but the amount of goods which could be purchased with that money. Forty years ago, the price of female labor per week was one yard of undressed woolen cloth; which cloth could be

sold for about sixty-seven cents. At the same time, calico was selling at from fifty to seventy-five cents a yard; so that a yard of decent calico was likely to cost the female a full week's work. Forty years ago, calico was too expensive to be worn every day; and one new dress a year was deemed extravagant, even among the better classes.

"I state these facts for the purpose of showing what a change has been brought about in this country, within the compass of a single generation. Almost every thing, not in its nature immutable, has been undergoing a change—a change, too, we hope, for the better. How greatly increased and extended are the facilities for acquiring education! How are papers, and books, and other means of imparting and diffusing knowledge multiplied! How has Christian philanthropy been vitalized and rendered efficient, by united and extended effort! In a word, what vast improvements have been going on, and are still

going on, in every department of human life! And yet there are some who are ever ready to complain of this progress, to mourn over it, and to insist that the former times were better than these. As well might they complain of the rivulet for becoming a river, or of the child for growing up to man's proportions, as murmur at the progress of that which has evidently received its onward impulse from an Almighty Hand."

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Fairfield early impressed with a sense of his great Sinfulness—The Death of his Father—Its Effect upon his Mind—His Peculiarities of Temperament—Bad Companions—Their Ruinous Influence—He is Awakened, Reformed, and Hopefully Converted—Becomes a Member of the Church, and walks worthily, for a Time.

In such a community as that described above, did Harrison Fairfield pass his childhood and his youthful days. He was the youngest and favorite child of his excellent mother, whose delight it was to instill into his opening mind a knowledge of the holy Scriptures. She often prayed with him; but O, how much more frequently did she pray for him! It was doubtless owing to her prayers, that in very early life he became the subject of deep religious impressions. His earliest recollections are of the solemn sense which he then had of the evil nature and dreadful consequences

of sin. At one period, particularly, these convictions were so pungent, that he was led to feel that his existence was a curse to him, and that he would gladly escape from it, if possible.

When about seven years old, the family was visited with a most distressing providence, which made an impression upon his peculiarly constituted mind, that was never effaced. He was aroused from sleep at midnight,—the sweet sleep of childhood,—and told that his father was dying. One week before, this same father was in robust health. The house was full of brothers, sisters, and anxious friends, all weeping and giving vent to their feelings—*all but one*. She was solemn, but calm. His mother seemed like one standing upon a rock, as indeed she did; while the others were tossed in the raging waves around them.

This death-scene, with the funeral and interment of his father, gave little Harrison such a terrible realization of the stern and

awful realities of life, as to bring over him, even at that early period, those deep shades of melancholy, which afterwards rendered him, at times, so miserable.

I have said that the temperament of Harrison was peculiar. In very childhood he was inclined to shun the company of children, and if he could not be with his mother, he preferred to be alone. Though his feelings and affections were of the most ardent kind, there was something about him which led others to suspect that he was cold and unfeeling. Also then, as in after life, he was subject to fearful forbodings of something undefinable and dreadful that was likely to come upon him; and these began to tinge his life with a sombre aspect. Questions that have perplexed the wise and the learned in all ages, were often suggested to him at this period, and occupied his thoughts.

One of these was the notable question in regard to the *permission of sin;* and without ever having heard of the ancient Gnos-

tics, some of their vain speculations were entertained by him.

His great diffidence and bashfulness in early life, increased his aversion to society, and rendered him awkward in it; and being often ridiculed by those about him, his trials found little alleviation, except in the society of his mother. She alone understood him, and was able to comfort him. Her influence over him was unbounded, and it was all exerted for his good. The religious ideas which she then impressed upon him, were never effaced. They were so inwrought into the very texture of the soul, that nothing could remove them.

When Harrison was about twelve years old, he was for a long time the subject of deep religious impressions; but these passed off, without resulting in a saving change. When he was fourteen years old, a change took place in his outward circumstances, which brought him under influences exceedingly different from those to

which he had before been subject. From the moral and religious community in which he had been bred, the family removed into a place where much ardent spirit was sold and drunk; where many of the people were profane and licentious; and where fatal errors prevailed in regard to religious doctrine. And to complete the array of evil influences, Harrison was put into a factory as an apprentice, among some of the worst men and boys that could be collected outside of a prison. Drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, blasphemy, and even thievish practices, were their delight.

I will not undertake to describe the misery of young Fairfield, during the first few months that he spent in this company. It is indescribable. I have said that he was constitutionally bashful. It was at this point, after trying others in vain, that the enemy successfully assaulted him. Being accustomed to see others, even good men, drink, (for all drank more or less in

those times,) he was induced, on one occasion, to partake of the poisonous liquid that was constantly urged upon him. The effect of the draught upon him was marvelous. It removed his native bashfulness, made him fluent and talkative, and gave new courage to his timid, shrinking heart. Thus excited and emboldened, he was easily induced to drink again and again, and in the course of two years he became a drunkard. He was more than a drunkard; he was a bold blasphemer, and stood foremost in the company of the infamous, hardened creatures with whom he was associated.

This was a dreadful trial to his poor mother; but, like Hannah of old, to her "there was no rock like her God." She pleaded, she prayed; and through her influence, chiefly, the eyes of the people were opened. They saw the evil of drinking, and of trafficking in intoxicating spirits; the temperance reformation reached the place; the town was purged of this

mother of abominations, and young Fairfield was reclaimed. In other words, his appetite was subdued, though not eradicated, as the sequel will show.

The habit of profane swearing was at this time more indomitable with him, than that of strong drink. He often tried to overcome it, but did not succeed, until he was again visited with the strivings of the Holy Spirit. His former impressions were revived, and for the next two years he used no profane language at all. He often prayed in secret at this time, though he had a strong aversion to attending public worship — so strong, that nothing but a mother's influence could prevail to overcome it.

One lovely Sabbath morning, in the month of May, while looking out upon the glories of creation, he felt a new and strong impulse moving him to go to meeting. He went, and while standing with others about the door, he heard some one speak of a certain part of a late sermon as

peculiarly interesting. The remark struck him with unaccountable force.

"What!" said he to himself, "is it possible that there is any interesting part to a sermon?"

The thought dwelt upon his mind, and he resolved to watch closely, upon that occasion, and see if there *was* any thing interesting in what to him had always been so dull. The preacher for the day was the late Rev. Dr. Gillet, of Hallowell, Me., and the sermon, to young Fairfield, was one of a stirring character.

From that time he attended constantly at the house of God, and his mind was enlighted and impressed. Shortly after, a revival of religion commenced, in connection with a protracted meeting, in which he was made to fear and tremble, under a sense of sin. His guilt appeared to him so great and aggravated, that it seemed as though God, the holy sovereign of the universe, *could not* consistently pass it over. He regarded himself as inevitably and

justly ruined. He continued in this state of guilt and despair for several days, until, on one Sabbath evening, deliverance came. This declaration of Scripture was brought to his mind—"That He might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." He was led to see something of the fullness and sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ, and to trust to it for the pardon of his sins. His burden was, in great measure, removed. He was led to hope that his sins, though terribly aggravated, might be forgiven. In September, 1831, he united with the Congregational church in Vassalborough, with which he walked consistently for several years.

But there were some things, in and about him at this time, which made his condition an unhappy one. He had no regular occupation, and had no one to direct or assist him in procuring one. Then his strong, undisciplined imagination was a trouble to him. No sooner did he think of any particular occupation, than his imagi-

nation would seize upon it, and conduct him rapidly through all its parts, keeping out of view its difficulties, and firing him with the prospect of success; so that when he entered upon it, and began to grapple with its hard realities, he would soon be disappointed and discouraged.

But I must pass over this part of his experience, so suggestive of admonition to the young, and come to what I had more particularly in view in this memoir—a narrative of the wonderful dealings of God with this young man, during the latter half of his life.

For five years he endeavored to maintain a spiritual mind, and a consistent walk with God. The Bible, self-examination, and secret prayer, were his delight, and every duty which he thought himself able to perform, he discharged. His bashfulness was so excessive, that it was next to impossible for him to take any part in public meetings; and his being often called upon and urged to do so, was a severe trial.

I can but think that ministers and others often mistake, in urging the timid and the bashful to speak and pray in public. Though all should be induced to cultivate their talents and gifts, we should never forget that there are diversities of temperaments, and that a profession of Christ before men, supported by a holy, consistent life, is the most effective testimony we can give, as to the reality and power of our religion.

The subject of this narrative was sometimes kept from religious meetings, under the impression that if he attended, he should be urged—*compelled*, as it were—to do what he felt that he could not do, and what, of course, he was unwilling to attempt. And when he did attend, he was continually tortured with the apprehension that he should be called upon to speak, and thus he failed to receive the benefit which he might otherwise have realized from so important a means of grace.

Such was Harrison Fairfield, between

the years of 1831 and 1836, earnestly desiring and striving to lead a Christian life, and be devoted to the cause of Christ, but yet compassed about with difficulties and infirmities, and falling continually short of the high standard at which he aimed.

But we must now enter upon a very different account of him, which will be the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER III.

Comparative Ignorance of Mr. F. when he became a Member of the Church—Remarkable Answer to Prayer—Commencement of his Declension—Neglect of Secret Prayer and other Religious Duties—Excuses for the Same—Fancies himself growing Liberal and Wise—Effect of reading Works of Fiction—Falls into the Company of Universalists, and tries hard to be One—Exposes their Sophistries, and the Seductive Nature of their System.

When the subject of this sketch united with the church, in 1831, he assented to the articles of faith, and thought he believed them; but he was in great measure ignorant of the full significance and extent of some of them. The doctrine of Election often troubled him. He did not see then, as he did in later life, that the sinner could have no hope of salvation without it. He was ignorant of the nature and strength of human depravity. The doctrine of Perseverance, the covenant faithfulness of God, his promises to hear and answer the prayers of his children—these things were not to

him then the vivid realities which his subsequent experience contributed to make them.

And yet a remarkable instance of answer to prayer occurred at the very meeting when Mr. Fairfield hoped that he was converted. An aged and pious couple from a neighboring town, who attended the meeting, had a son who had wandered far away from his home and God. He was in the city of St. Louis, an infidel, and a propagator of infidel principles. His case was brought before the meeting, and much prayer was offered for him. And almost at the same time, (as was afterwards learned), in the midst of his wicked companions, he was smitten down by the Spirit, was brought into great distress, and ere long found joy and peace in believing.

It is often said that the age of miracles is past. They were necessary to establish the claims of revelation, at the time when that was made; but the canon of Scripture being closed, we are no longer to look

for them. This is undoubtedly true. And yet, is God no longer known by the judgments which he executeth? Has he ceased to illustrate the truths of his Word by the dispensations of his providence and grace? I think not. The promises of answer to prayer are so positive, so often repeated, and so variously illustrated, as to afford a perpetual test of the truth of Divine revelation.

When a striking case, like that alluded to above, occurs, those who witness it, feel, for a time, their faith strengthened; and yet it is so difficult to maintain an advance position, that they soon fall back to the level of the general standard of faith. But when one has had the truth *scourged* into him, by the hand of a faithful, covenant-keeping God, it is very likely to remain. So when one has been brought into a condition to feel the strength of his own depravity, and his utter helplessness and inability to overcome it, it cannot be expected that theories which contradict his own expe-

rience will have much influence with him.

In the year 1836 Mr. F. was placed in a situation where he had no closet to which he could conveniently retire, to engage in secret prayer. Consequently he was led very often to omit it. Little did he think at that time, that the excuses with which he attempted to quiet his conscience, were from the Wicked One; or that in accepting any excuse for the neglect of so plain a duty, he was taking the first step in a course that was to land him in disgrace and ruin. Let the young Christian beware of the *first* neglect of closet duties; and when he finds himself growing contented and easy in such neglect, let him begin to tremble.

When the performance of secret prayer had come to depend upon circumstances, and when our young friend had begun to look for, and gladly accept of, excuses for its neglect, then the reading of the Scriptures was put upon the same ground.

His love for the Bible sensibly diminished, and a desire to read other books, and such as he had before considered unprofitable, and even pernicious, proportionably increased.

At this point in his downward career, he stumbled upon what he considered a very fortunate discovery. It seemed to him that he had been too bigoted, too illiberal, too narrow and contracted in his views. He began to look down upon his brethren who remained steadfast with God, with a feeling of contempt. It is wonderful how the views of some persons are elevated and enlarged, in the process of backsliding or apostacy.

At this time, young Fairfield began to feel his old appetite for strong drink reviving within him. For years he had abstained entirely from any indulgence of this kind, and that chiefly for the good of others, and that his example might go to strengthen the cause of reform. But now he discovered, that there were a great many people

in this world, of different occupations and inclinations, and that they all had equal rights.

What rights or claims has one heart-broken woman, or starving child, more than others? The rumseller has a wife and children to be provided for, as well as the drunkard. And why should I forego the privilege of drinking a glass of wine occasionally with a friend, because another man gets drunk and abuses his family? I suppose the old scribes and Pharisees reasoned much after this sort, when they sought to destroy our Saviour, because he had raised Lazarus from the dead.

"What right had he to come, at the call of Martha and Mary, and raise their brother from the dead, when by so doing he put at hazard the safety, and it may be, the very existence of the whole Jewish nation?"

Yet these same scribes and Pharisees could come down from their elevated

position, and their broad, patriotic views, when they laid their lecherous hands upon a poor, trembling woman, and dragged her into the presence of the same Saviour, to gratify their envy and their hate.

It is not uncommon for those who frequent bar-rooms, and there enter upon the road to ruin, to commence their course with thoughts and feelings like those described by Mr. Fairfield. They begin by expatiating upon the evils of bigotry and hypocrisy, and on the importance of rising above the prejudices of education and custom, and taking more comprehensive views of things.

This is a masterly trick of the old adversary, by which he really makes men believe that they are growing wise, when they are becoming fools—that they are advancing upwards to heaven, when they are actually sinking into perdition. So the fallen Christian often thinks himself raised to a happy elevation, from which he looks down

with pity, if not contempt, upon his humble, watchful, faithful brethren, who are mourning over their sins, and striving to overcome them. And when he falls into sins of such magnitude that they can no longer be blinked out of sight, he comforts himself by saying that man is, to a great extent, the creature of circumstances; or his peculiar temperament and organization are lugged in to make the apology complete. O, these attending circumstances — this bodily temperament—this peculiar cerebral organization—this monomaniacal proclivity —this slight tendency towards insanity; — what wonders may they not accomplish towards soothing a terrified and stinging conscience! Justification by faith is as nothing in the comparison.

From his boyhood, Mr. Fairfield had been a great reader; but up to the time of which we are speaking, he had allowed himself to read nothing of a trifling or fictitious character. The Scriptures and other religious books had been his principal study.

But when he begun to neglect his religious duties, and grew more liberal, as he thought, he gradually changed his course of reading. Well written works of fiction he now considered as not only allowable, but desirable, to make one wise, more especially in the knowledge of human nature.

But, alas! the reading of such books became one of the most potent influences in undermining his religious principles, and bringing upon him those unutterable miseries which we are about to contemplate. In six months after he commenced his course of novel reading, his closet was entirely forsaken, the Bible was laid aside, the prayer-meetings were deserted, and although he attended public worship on the Sabbath, so far as his own spirit was concerned, he might as well have been absent. The study of romances, and plays, and poetical works of an evil character, engrossed him entirely. His voluptuous imagination would revel with the characters

there introduced, while his inventive genius would color and intensify their exciting adventures.

I cannot but think that works of this character are highly pernicious to the young. Of course, they do not affect all persons as they did the subject of this sketch; but they contain the spirit and the substance of a poisonous infidelity—mixed up, it is true, and often concealed, as literal poisons sometimes are in sugar—but not, on this account, the less deadly in their influence.

No sooner had young Fairfield cast off the restraints of a religious life, than he began to try to persuade himself that such a life was not necessary to salvation. Nor was this a very difficult matter; for at this time, he was much in the company of an intelligent Universalist who supplied him with arguments, and with books. And it is remarable, that just in proportion to the weakening of his religious principles, and his progress in a life of sin, was his progress

in this delusive error. Practices which he once regarded as exceedingly sinful and hateful in the sight of God, he now held to be perfectly innocent; and acts too gross to be considered innocent, were attributed to circumstances, or bodily temperament — any thing rather than to a depraved and corrupted heart.

As this is the bait which Satan often throws out, to lure immortal beings away from God, I must be permitted to dwell upon it for a moment. There was one truth in Mr. Fairfield's mind, which could not be easily dislodged; and that was, *salvation by the blood of Christ.* Though he tried hard to dispense with faith in Christ, his own experience of the efficacy of this doctrine, to deliver the soul from guilt, was too vivid in his remembrance to allow him to reason it away. Unable to wrest this doctrine from him, the tempter set himself to pervert it. It was suggested to Mr. Fairfield's mind, that as God in his mercy had caused an atonement

to be made for sin, he would ultimately destroy all sin, and drive it from the universe. If man can conceive of the desirableness of a universal, over a partial salvation, how much more desirable must it seem to God? And will not he, whose power and goodness are illimitable, be sure to make all men holy and happy?

This reason may be regarded as plausible, but it is seductive and fatal. So the subject of this sketch found it, and God be praised that he so found it in this world of hope, and not in the regions of despair.

The sum and substance of Universalism is this: since God possesses the power, he is bound to exercise it, in making all men happy, *whether they will or not.* These men rob God of his justice, and in fact of his holiness, while they so pervert and humanize his benevolence, as to destroy entirely the symmetry of his character, especially when we consider him as the righteous moral Governor of the universe.

They know not the natures of either sin or holiness, and nothing but the Spirit of God, whose assistance they do not ask for or desire, can enable them to perceive either, as they must, before they are prepared to meet God in peace. They have never felt, in their own souls, the exceeding sinfulness of sin—felt it as a heavy burthen under which they can never rise, until God interpose, by his grace, to break its power. Perfect holiness can no more harmonize with sin, than fire and gunpowder can meet and harmonize. There is an eternal antagonism between them—an omnipotent and mutual repulsion.

Such are the views of sin which the subject of this sketch had at the time of his conversion; and they would never permit him to rest quietly in the Universalist doctrines. He was continually shifting from one form of the error to another—discarding one false opinion, and taking up another—but settled upon nothing, and resting quietly nowhere.

If sinners have more power than God, then may they hope to escape the consequences of sin in some other way than that which he has provided. No—*not even then;* for misery will follow sin, as the shadow does the substance, or the night the day. Like the essence and attributes of God, they are inseparable. God may overrule the wicked actions of men, and make them contribute to his praise; but the conscious guilt of them, and their power to torment the perpetrator, can never be removed but by the forgiving grace of God; and this can be exercised only on condition of repentance, and through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Those with whom Mr. F. associated at this time, denied the proper Divinity of Christ, and the doctrine of atonement by his death. They would have sin forgiven, and the evil consequences of it removed, whenever the sinner was pleased to repent, and on the ground of such repentance, whether in this world or the next; forget-

ful of the claims of God's law and government, and that "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne." He must take good care of the sinner, at any rate, and make him happy, whatever may be the consequences to himself, and to the better part of his intelligent creation.

Some regarded death as a sort of alchemy, that purifies the soul at once, and fits it for heaven; — as though one of the natural consequences of sin could change the nature of sin itself, and remove all the other bitter consequences resulting from it.

Some thought that it would be easy to repent in the other world, when the spirit is separated from the flesh, because there would be fewer temptations there. However this may be, *conscience* will be there; and that will be enough unless pacified through the blood of Christ, to torture the guilty soul forever. I have never heard God blamed for creating man

with a conscience. Without it he would be a brute, and society would be but a herd of brutes. And so long as a guilty conscience remains, there can be no peace anywhere to the wicked.

The day is coming, if the Bible is true, when even our most secret sins shall be set in the light of God's countenance. In the eternal world, when the sinner shall be stripped of all those disguises, with which he now deceives himself and others—when he shall be constrained to look upon all his misdeeds, hung up, as it were, in the light of God's countenance — when he shall see them set in such a frame, and painted upon such a background, like spots of blackness upon the disk of the blazing sun,—O, then, what will be the workings and the power of conscience! It will no longer whisper, but clamor; no longer plead and admonish, but torture and condemn. Then will the sinner not only see sin as it is, but he will see more strongly, by contrast, the holiness, the justice, the goodness of God;

and this view of God, instead of producing repentance and love, will only excite him to a more violent opposition—to impotent rage. Yes, *impotent rage*—that is the word; and what source of anguish can compare with that?

In an insane hospital, I once saw a victim of *impotent rage*. He was called insane, and so he was; though he was more of a demoniac than a madman. He was perfectly naked, because he would rend the clothes, and had it been possible, would have rent the skin and flesh from his limbs and body. He was in a small room, with walls and floor of stone and brick. I looked through a narrow grating, and saw him, though he did not see me. He foamed at the mouth; he would clench and pluck the hair from his head; while his dismal howlings were enough to rend the heart. His face was disfigured by blows from his own fist.

I saw him, with all his might, strike his own face; and his keeper told me that

not unfrequently he knocked himself down. He poured forth a continual torrent of the most horrid oaths and imprecations, while the veins of his neck and face were swollen with a frenzy of *impotent rage*. He strove impotently to vent his fury upon God and man. I thought him then, and have often thought of him as, a fit emblem of the ravings and miseries of the bottomless pit.

While man has a limitless capacity for enjoyment, he has also a like capacity for misery; and is God to be blamed for making him such? God does not inflict miseries except where there is actual sin; and even where there *is* sin, he has kindly provided a way of escape, and is urging the transgressor to flee from the wrath to come. Yea, more than this; he is mercifully extending the hand of his grace, and proffering all needed help. Who, then, is to blame, if the sinner is not saved? Upon whom shall the lost rebel charge his miseries, but upon himself?

CHAPTER IV.

Contrast in the Condition of Mr. F.—Death of his Mother—His Pride of Character and Hardness of Heart—Falls into the Habit of Drinking, and Becomes a Drunkard—The Peculiar Effect of Strong Drink upon him—His unutterable Miseries—Is received twice into an Insane Hospital—Attempts to commit Suicide, but is Mercifully Prevented—Friends Disappointed and Discouraged—He enters a Community, but is Discarded even there—Deliverance about to Come.

We will now return to the narrative before us. And first of all, let us contrast the moral condition of this young man, at the time of which we speak, with what it was eight years before.

During the first five years that he was a member of the church—owing in great measure to the care and counsels of his mother—it may be said of him, with as little abatement as in almost any similar case, that he walked closely and consistently with God. He scrupulously performed all private religious duties, and

carefully abstained from every thing which he supposed was wrong. Indeed, he abstained from many things which are generally allowed, under a timed apprehension that they *might* be wrong. His self-examination was rigorous, and often performed. His heart was soft, his conscience tender, and a spirit of pungent penitence was ever active within.

But, alas! what was he in 1839? A vile backslider, if not an apostate; withheld, by principle, from the commission of hardly any species of wickedness; not only disregarding, but often ridiculing, the just claims of God upon his sinful offspring. His heart was hard as the nether millstone; his pride was devilish, considering himself raised above the generality of those with whom he associated; he looked down with contempt upon his Christian brethren, and often made them the subject of ridicule. He had no sympathy for the poor and the suffering. In short, the character of the unjust judge was applicable to

him—"He feared not God, nor regarded man."

The death of his excellent mother, which occurred about this time, instead of softening him, as might be supposed, served rather to harden him, and fill his mouth with murmurs and complaints. He was ready to reproach the Almighty, for bringing him into such a relation, without making it eternal.

Up to this time, his moral character was outwardly fair, and of this he was excessively proud. His brethren had not called him to an account for his delinquencies, and he still continued a member of the church. At heart, however, he was more of a Universalist than a Congregationalist, and in practice more of an atheist than a Christian.

But "before destruction, the heart of man is haughty." It was at this stage, in the beginning of the year 1840, that the hand of a holy, covenant-keeping God was laid upon him. Blessed be the Lord, who

heareth and remembereth the prayers of his people; young Fairfield was not permitted longer to prosper in his course of hard-hearted rebellion. He seems to have been given over into the hands of Satan, with about the same limitation as in the case of Job—the tempter must spare his life.

The apostle Paul speaks of a similar case, where one was given over, for a time, "into the hands of Satan, that he might learn not to blaspheme." No doubt Satan had much to do with the fall and consequent miseries of Mr. Fairfield. But it was true of him, as it has been of many others—*his own iniquities were made the means of reproving him.*

It has been said already that his appetite for strong drink, formed in early life, had never been wholly eradicated. But during his religious life, it was never indulged; and after his declension had commenced, and had made alarming progress, it was indulged but occasionally. It did not com-

port with his broad and liberal view of things, to abstain entirely; and yet he drank but little—often not more than a glass in a month.

But in December, 1839, he removed to another part of the country, where he was a total stranger; and here, like a house before a tornado, he was prostrated at once. In January, 1840, he was a moderate drinker, with fair external character, and bright prospects. In July of the same year, he was a confirmed drunkard, beyond the reach of human power to reclaim, and incapable of any business whatever.

Strong drink had a singular effect upon him. It raged through his blood like liquid fire, and caused a sensation in the brain, as though hot embers were being poured upon it. The horrors of *delirium tremens* were his, without the literal insanity. Then the horrors of a guilty conscience, clear and awful conceptions of Divine truth, hatred of God, impotent rage,

and the powers and passions of a depraved soul, once reclaimed from the power of sin, but now wholly enslaved by it,—all these, like so many furies let loose to rend and appal his affrighted soul, combined to make him the most wretched being on the earth. For days and nights in succession he would walk, and walk, without a moment's rest or sleep, without taking a particle of food, or any thing but cold water, sweating and groaning till he could walk no longer; and then he would sink down, sometimes among strangers, but more frequently on the naked earth, with no covering but the heavens, and no companions but fiends.

"I remember one night in particular, when, on the leeward side of a comfortable house, I attempted, at midnight, to shield my shivering body from the cold; listening to the wind, as it echoed my groans around the corner of the house, or to the town clock, as it announced the departure

of the sluggish hours, until the wished-for morning was seen coming over the eastern hills, blushing, as I could easily imagine, to look upon a wretch like me. I remember spending another night, in the way I have described, around a splendid house, owned and occupied by a young man who was reared in the same neighborhood with myself. We were once intimate friends, and my prospects for a happy life were as fair as his. But he resolved, early in life, to abstain entirely from the intoxicating cup, while I argued stoutly against such narrow, needless scrupulousness, and on the propriety of taking, occasionally, a glass of wine."

The above is no overwrought picture, but a true account of some of the terrible scourgings which Mr. F. endured, while he bore the indignation of the Lord, because he had sinned against him.

All self-control was now gone. Many times he went, designedly, to reside in

places where no liquor was to be had; but something would always occur to drive him back again. Formerly, he had been exceedingly proud of his good character. At the time when he was more of an infidel than a Christian, his moral character stood fair, and the possibility of a suspicion resting upon it, was enough to fill him with rage. Upon drunkenness, he looked, at that period, with special abhorrence. For the intemperate, he had no other feelings than those of detestation and contempt.

Judge, then, of his shame and misery, when he woke up to his situation, and found himself a drunkard—in the fangs of the destroyer, with no power to help or save himself! His friends did not, at once, forsake him, as he would have forsaken a fallen fellow-creature in similar circumstances; but their efforts for him were of no avail. He tried to keep out of sight of his former acquaintances, but during the six years that he was in this state, he

was somehow led into every place, and constrained to exhibit his degradation, to almost every person from whom he would specially have desired to conceal it. Never did fallen pride and vanity so writhe in inconceivable tortures.

When he found that he could neither prevent nor conceal his disgrace, and that all ordinary means were impotent to save, —being appalled, too, with the fearful apprehension of something still more dreadful that was soon to befall him,—he applied to the officers of an insane hospital, and entreated them to lock him up, that so he might be sheltered, and protected from himself. He preferred the howlings of maniacs, to the imaginary exultant shouts of demons, that everywhere pursued him.

The first time he was in the hospital, he continued there about five months. He afterwards returned, and remained a few weeks. But his confinement did not suffice to cure his appetite, or to relieve

his miseries. The sources of his sufferings were within himself, and no bolted doors or prison walls could exclude them.

After finally leaving the hospital, he was in a more miserable condition, if possible, than ever before. The last glimmering hope had now failed him. Every thing valuable, except his life, (and that was now a curse to him), was gone, apparently forever. His former friends had become discouraged, and abandoned him. His money, health and strength, were all gone. He had no home—no hope. There was but one opening before him, and that was, the drunkard's grave.

He left his native place at this time, with the intention of suicide. He prepared to meet death, and to find a resting-place for his weak, trembling body, away from his former home. After proceeding on his way some ten or twelve miles, he approached the residence of his only living sister. That he might not be seen by her, or by any of her family, he purposed to

leave the road, just before he came to her house, and take a round-about path through the fields, to a pond, where he intended to drown himself.

But just as he was about to turn from the road, he fell down in a fit, was found there insensible, was taken up, and carried to his sister's house. And here he remained for about two years. As he had never had a fit before, the hand of Providence was distinctly visible in this. By means of it he was saved, not only from death, but from dying by his own hands.

While at this place, though weak in body, and in a very depressed and miserable state of mind, he was more free from the immediate effects of strong drink, and on the whole less wretched, than he had been for two years before. Many a time, while here, when he would awake in the night, and find himself free from the effects of ardent spirit, has he arisen from his bed, kneeled down, and thanked God

that he was, for the time, out of the power of his terrible enemy, and most earnestly prayed that he might ever remain so. But the day of his deliverance was not yet. Even here he sometimes fell into the hands of the destroyer; and at the expiration of the second year, these friends lost all hope and patience, and with others, gave him up for lost.

There was now but one resource left to him. He had a few friends in Massachusetts, who had known him in his best state, and who had never seen him since his fall. To them he resolved to go, and, if possible, to reform. Praying to God to keep him, he commenced his journey; and though he arrived there in due time, it was in such a condition as to make him an unwelcome visitor. However, remembering what he once was, their sympathy was greatly excited, and they made an effort, yes, two or three efforts, to restore him; but in vain. Regarding his case as hopeless, they also abandoned him.

Once more, then, we see him, thrown out of an excellent situation, and doomed to wander, a homeless, penniless vagabond among strangers. In November, 1844, he found himself in a large town near Boston, where he was entirely unknown, and where he had never been before. He hardly knew how he came there, but there he was, one hundred and fifty miles from home, or rather, from the place which was once his home. He had no money, and was almost destitute of clothes, cold winter was coming on, and as he walked the streets of that village, hungry, sick, and weary, without food, shelter, or friend, his situation was truly deplorable. When he saw the cheerful lights in the windows, and heard the happy voices within, and remembered that only a little while before he was thus comfortably situated, and that he had forfeited all by his own sins, the anguish of his mind was inconceivable—the cup of his misery was full.

After remaining in this place about a

week, he went to a joint stock *Community*, established in a neighboring town, and proposed to become a member of it. He hoped that here he should be out of the reach of his worst enemy. He was kindly received, and remained in the Community almost two years. He might have remained longer, but the inmates — notwithstanding their unbounded faith in man, and in the great power of kindness—became at length discouraged with him, and gave him up. When free from strong drink, there was much in his appearance that was hopeful. It really seemed, at times, as though a reformation would be effected. But though he ardently longed for deliverance, and often prayed for it, there seemed to be a decree of the Omnipotent against it. When appearances were the most encouraging, something would occur to prostrate hope, and the enemy would triumph over him.

The artifices of Satan were many, and he practiced them as far as he was per-

mitted; but his power over this poor, fallen, scourged victim, delivered into his hands for a time, that he might learn not to blaspheme, was about to end. It is a fearful thing for one who has taken the vows of God upon him, and promised, before angels and men, to seek and find his happiness in God, to turn back from him to the world—thus virtually saying that religion has disappointed him, and that there is more enjoyment in sinful pursuits than in the service of Christ. And there is a bitter cup—"the wormwood and the gall"—presented to lips of every such wanderer; and he must drink it to the dregs, ere he can expect to be restored to the hopes and comforts of religion.

Though the power of Satan over the subject of this narrative is about to be broken, his sufferings do not end here, as we shall see. But the prayers of his sainted mother are about to be answered, and henceforward we are to contemplate

him in the progress of his return. It is a rugged path, of which he knew but little before he attempted it. But of this we shall speak in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

Mr. F. leaves the Community in Despair—Resolves to End his Life by Strong Drink—He is surprised to find that he cannot taste Spirits — His Appetite changed into a strong Aversion — This Result in answer to Prayer—Still opposed to Religion and the Church—Dissatisfied with Universalism—Flies to Swedenborgianism, Fourierism, and Socialism—His Opinion of the Swedenborgian Theory.

When it was fully determined that Mr. Fairfield was to leave the Community—when that last, unlooked-for resource had failed, and the most enthusiastically hopeful had despaired of him—to what earthly resource could he look for help? Yea, to what *heavenly* resource could he look?—for the heavens over his head had long seemed to be brass, and prayer on his behalf had been in vain.

When he left the Community, he left with the determination to drink all he could get, and destroy himself as soon as possible. He left, ostensibly, to go to his native

place, but not knowing at all where he should stop.

On his arrival in Boston, (only a few miles from the Community,) he applied at once for intoxicating drink. But judge of his surprise and astonishment, when he found, upon trial, that he could not drink it. Though his stomach was in a good, normal state, not having drunk any thing for three weeks, yet no sooner did he smell the liquor, than that organ was violently convulsed.

Indeed, before he attempted to drink, he perceived that the raging thirst which had burned within him, with unequal though always with great intensity, for six years, had subsided; so that he only attempted to drink, at this time, to drown consciousness, and lose the terrible realization of his condition, in intoxication.

To effect this, he persevered in his attempts to drink for several days; and though he did succeed, once or twice, in swallowing the liquor, no sooner did it

enter the stomach than it was ejected, with the most violent convulsions. And from that day, as long as he lived, Mr. F. never felt the least desire or inclination to drink. He was often exposed in the midst of liquor and liquor consumers, but remained throughout as free from his old longings and thirstings as an infant. Indeed, the burning desire which he used to feel, was turned into a strong aversion. He loathed the intoxicating cup as intensely as he before longed for it.

On one occasion, some months after his deliverance, in a fit of desperation, Mr. F. renewed the attempt to drown himself in partial intoxication; and though he succeeded, two or three times, in getting down a small quantity of liquor, it failed entirely of producing its usual effects. It was swallowed with the utmost difficulty, and when swallowed, it intoxicated no more than so much water. This experiment had a lasting effect upon him. He

dared not repeat it, believing, that in so doing, he fearfully tempted God.

The account here given, it will be admitted on all hands, is very strange. It was so to Mr. F. He consulted physicians on the subject. He looked into many a volume, in hope to find some similar case, or to find some law or principle of physiology, by which to account for it; but in vain. All that he knows of the matter is, that such was the fact; and the only explanation he was ever able to give, is the following, which we will now briefly state.

About three weeks before he left the Community, one of its members, without the knowledge of Mr. Fairfield, wrote to a pious friend in his native town, stating what had been his conduct there, and what was the result of all their endeavors on his behalf. From Boston, Mr. F. went directly to the place where this friend resided; he soon met him, and had conversation with him respecting his condition

and prospects. This friend then said to him—

"Harrison, I believe you are about to be saved from the power of strong drink; for, upon receiving the letter of Mr. —— I was moved to pray for you as I never did before. I was so sensibly assisted in my prayers—I prayed with such an importunate agony—with such an energy of faith—that I felt assured of a favorable answer. I cannot doubt that you are about to be delivered."

Such was the account he gave to me and such were the connected results. And now what shall we say to all this? By what name shall we call it? I do not call the change which took place in me a miracle, though it was evidently out of the ordinary course of nature. But that it was accomplished by the direct power of God, and in answer to the prayer of my Christian friend, I cannot entertain a doubt.

Behold now this young man, plucked by Divine power from the devouring jaws of his worst enemy, weak in body, distrusted by former friends, stripped of every thing but life, with his mind stuffed full of errors, and overflowing with hatred against the truth, and the church of God. Although Universalism was the chief ground of his reliance, yet the great, fundamental doctrines of the gospel, which were so inwrought into his very being at the time of his supposed conversion that he could never eradicate them, would not suffer him to rest quietly on that foundation. Consequently, he was driven to seek for straw and stubble, with which to cover over the quagmires, and stop up the pit-falls, through which he feared he might stumble into that hell of which he had had so many foretastes.

He first searched among the writings of Swedenborg for metaphysical opiates, with which to soothe his troubled spirit. Failing there, he next had recourse to

Fourier, who attempted to organize a sort of Swedenborgian heaven on the earth; but with no better success. Then he rested awhile, or tried to rest, in a coarse kind of Garrisonian Socialism. In short, he ransacked every system, and sounded every sea of error in vain, that he might if possible, find rest for his weary, wounded spirit somewhere out of Christ, and a path that should lead him out of a sorrowing world, and up to heaven, without the necessity of returning to the narrow way which he had left.

He made a more determined and persevering effort to rest in the Swedenborgian theory, than in any other; but he could not succeed. The nutriment was too thin and unsubstantial for one who had been reared from infancy upon the strong meat of Calvinism. There is something peculiarly fascinating in the Swedenborgian theory, to a certain class of minds, and to all classes in certain conditions. As a community, the members of the New

Church are intelligent and refined, and they pride themselves not a little on the possession of these qualities. It has been said that their books, or some of them, are of a licentious character. Of this, others can judge as well as I. But that they are themselves, a corrupt, licentious people I utterly deny. I feel sure that this is not the case. Purity of mind and life they hold to be one of the cardinal virtues.

Some have expressed surprise that so many intelligent persons—some of whom have been educated in the true faith—should embrace this system; but there is nothing surprising about it, unless it be the ingenuity of the system itself. It is indeed a most artfully contrived net, set midway between the cross of Christ and infidelity, to catch and to keep unwary souls.

I may illustrate this thought by an example. In the county where I was born, there lived for many years, an intelligent, well-educated, wealthy physician. He was

a proud, influential man, and had been a member of Congress. He was known as an avowed infidel. He had a lovely daughter, an only child, and his life, his all, seemed bound up in her. When about sixteen years old, she was taken sick, and died.

The proud, deistical father was inconsolable. He was bowed down to the earth, and groaned under a load of intense misery. His infidelity afforded him no consolation. No light broke in upon him from the spiritual world. To him all was dark beyond the tomb; and the most he could do was to cling to the material remains of the lost child. He devoted himself to the dead body, and spent hours and days in the tomb with it.

In this deplorable state, his attention was directed to the writings of Swedenborg. By a sympathizing female friend, the consolations of the New Church were spread out before him. Here was an opportunity to believe in a future state of

existence, and in a Divine revelation, without mortifying his vanity, or giving up any thing which his proud spirit chose to retain.

There was also something peculiarly soothing in the belief that his daughter was still about him—that he was influenced by her, and that she felt his influence in return.

The infidel doctor embraced the New Church doctrines, and found the comfort which they are fitted to afford. And yet, in all that is peculiar to Christianity, he was scarcely less an infidel than he was before.

Another influence growing out of the theory, and one which operates to bring in numbers who profess to believe the gospel, is this. There is a class of nervous, sensitive persons, who live in a constant dread of death. They cannot think of death and the grave without shuddering. How much an uneasy conscience has to do in this matter, I do not know, nor is it material as

to the result, for the conscience, as well as the nerves may be quieted by the prescriptions of Swedenborg.

Now when a person of this class is told that death is but an unconscious passage of the spirit from one body into another exactly resembling this,—a dropping to sleep and waking up in a body and a world so much like the present, that we know not that we are dead, until we are informed of the fact,—and that we then and there choose our own society and condition,—it serves greatly to soothe their troubled spirits, and quiet their fears of death.

But how much is there in this pleasing dream to satisfy a starving, perishing soul, which has seen its own exceeding sinfulness in the light of God's holy law, and felt its need of the blood of atonement to wash away its guilt ?

On this point the writer of this narrative could never feel satisfied, though he tried hard and long. The atonement of Christ, and justification by faith in his blood—

doctrines which Swedenborg condemns and ridicules—he never could reason away, or see how they could be dispensed with, and the sinner be saved.

There is also another thing in the system of Swedenborg in which he found it impossible to acquiesce, viz., that God has made a revelation to man, and caused it to be written in human language, and yet so concealed the meaning under correspondences and symbols, that man was none the wiser for it, until Swedenborg arose, to give the hidden, internal sense.

Swedenborg tells us that he saw those in the other world, who on earth had believed in justification by faith, and who persisted in such belief, riding upon horses, with their faces towards the horses' tails. I think that those who accept his theory of revelation, might not improperly be thus represented.

The members of this New Church, so called, are widely separated from all other sects; they belong to a new and higher

dispensation; they think it wrong to attend other meetings; their system is calculated, not to subdue pride, but to cherish it; and effectually cuts them off from all participation in the benefits of the gospel. The doctrines of the gospel, and the system of Swedenborg can never harmonize together.

CHAPTER VI.

Fourierism—Its Connection with Swedenborgianism—Its Anti-Christian Character—Mr. Fairfield's Account of the Community to which he belonged—His Experience in it—The Hatred of its Leaders to Evangelical Religion, and the Grounds of it—Mr. Fairfield's Views of the System.

I HAVE before said that Swedenborg's theory of society and organization in the spiritual world, was adopted by Fourier, and applied to men, and to social organization in this material world. Similarity of taste and occupation produces an affinity that unites, and an attraction that holds together, such as can harmoniously and happily live and operate together; while dissimilarity of disposition and taste separates individuals from each other, and from occupations for which they are unfit, and in which they can be neither good nor happy.

Though there have been a few Socialist Communities which have retained certain

portions of the Bible, and professed to make a great account of them, yet the spirit of Socialism and the spirit of the gospel are essentially antagonistic, and can never be made to harmonize together. Socialists believe that all that is necessary to make man good, pure, and happy, is to bring him into a position, an organization, favorable to the development of the better part of his nature. His sin and his misery are all chargeable to his outward circumstances and education.

But such a system is obviously defective and anti-christian. It overlooks entirely the fact of man's natural corruption and sinfulness. The leopard cannot change his spots, merely by moving from one place to another. The Community in which Mr. Fairfield spent almost two years, made great profession of attachment to certain parts of the Bible—such parts as did not directly thwart their principles, or condemn their practices. Nearly the whole of the Old Testament, however, and those parts of

the New, which did not represent man as an object of pity, and a victim of imposture, were set aside.

All that was before wanting to drive young Fairfield as far from God, and from the spirit of the gospel, as a human soul can go, until it goes out of this world of probation to the world of despair, was furnished by his two years' residence in the Community. I verily believe that there is more hope of an avowed atheist, than of a proud, self-sufficient Socialist, who claims to have extracted from the Bible all that is worth having, and wrought it into his system of spiritual licentiousness.

The members of this particular Community professed to be the purest and most devoted Christians. And yet they hated the church of God with a perfect hatred, and lost no opportunity to malign and injure it. The evangelical, orthodox church was the first and great obstacle to be demolished, before the race could be

brought up into a state of perfection. And why? Because the members of the church would neither engage in, nor countenance, any reformatory movement which went to distract or weaken itself. Then these church-members have such a feeling of reverence for *authority*, (meaning the Bible), that they will not go contrary to it, however much new light may be shed upon a subject. Besides, this orthodox religion has a disastrous influence upon the young. It cramps the energy of the human soul, and makes man contented in his miseries, by inculcating a reliance upon *Divine Providence*, instead of encouraging a spirit of self-reliance. How many young men, religiously educated, have been caught in this snare, and led blindly on to infidelity, will never be known till the last judgment day.

The subject of this narrative readily assented to the charges above noticed against evangelical religion, and entered into the warfare against the church of Christ. But

he had not long acted with his new brethren, before he began to be seriously troubled, and even shocked, at their profound ignorance of the church, its ministers, and members.

O, what a melting, overwhelming emotion would the remembrance of his old conference-meetings sometimes bring over him. He would then say to himself—

"Could these people attend one such meeting and hear the humble confessions, and witness the unfeigned penitence of these church-members, whom they now so abuse and slander, they must change their minds and their practice."

He ought to have said this aloud, in the hearing of his companions. He was also constrained to see, that the church which he had deserted and betrayed, with all its imperfections, was a very paradise, compared with the condition of those who were so vehemently crying out against it.

During the two years that Mr. F. spent

in the Community, there was scarcely an hour in which there was not some trouble, friction, or contention. Human nature, forced into so unnatural a position, was constantly rebelling. The inmates were ever changing their plan of organization and operation, and were always sure that the last plan was the true one, until finally they gave up in despair, and went back to the old and oft-abused position of the rest of mankind.

Meekness, forbearance, non-resistance—these words were constantly on their lips, while persecution even for opinion's sake was their constant practice. Never has the writer of this witnessed, in any community, such a relentless spirit of persecution, as was habitually manifested by these people. He who dared to oppose the leaders, was, if, possible, driven from the Community; and not only so, he was followed up with a vindictive malice, which strongly contrasted with the professions of

forbearance and non-resistance which were constantly heard.

I have nothing personal against these people; on the contrary, I have many reasons to think and speak of them with gratitude. I was kindly received by them, and kindly treated, at a time when I was without friends, and without any means of support or comfort. Still, I soon found that if well-treated, I was a well-treated slave. The evil was in the system, and not in the men. The gospel does not bring forth fruit such as this; and the church, far as it is below its proper standard, has a thousand-fold more of the spirit of the gospel, than those who in their pride and self-sufficiency, put the authority of Divine revelation below their own notions of right and wrong.

How often have I heard preachers and lecturers among this people, use language like the following:

"Am I to be bound and directed by the authority of another? If Jesus Christ tells

me that slavery is right, and that I must not labor for its extermination, I tell Jesus Christ that he is mistaken, and I will not be bound by his authority. If the Bible tells me that wine-drinking is proper, I tell the Bible that I know better."

Each seemed anxious to outdo all others in extravagance of speech, and in the boldness of his blasphemy.

These Socialists had a great sympathy for thieves and murderers. They were to be pitied more than blamed, being victims of a false state of society. To this, and not to a depraved and wicked heart, their crimes against society were to be imputed.

It was the delight of this people to 'speak evil of dignitaries,' and it was one of their objections to the Bible, that it enjoined obedience to civil rulers. Reverence for authority, whether human or divine, was a great evil. It cramped and fettered the mind of man, and served

to keep him out of the ranks of reformers.

It was interesting to study the history of these socialist reformers, and trace their progress from one degree of extravagance to another. Several years ago, when the criminality of the war spirit began to be discussed, a clergyman in Massachusetts embraced the peace doctrines. And this was well enough, if he could only have stopped there. But he soon came out a thorough-going non-resistant. Next he was a Come-outer from church and state, and was laboring diligently to bring both into contempt. After that he became a Socialist, and an infidel. He was a traducer of the great and good Washington, because he did not emancipate his slaves, and drive slavery from the new republic. The last we heard of him, he had waged war with death. He was denouncing people for the sin of dying—insisting that it was unnecessary and wrong for any person to be sick or to die.

The president of the Community to which I belonged, began his public life a Freewill Baptist minister. But having an active, inquisitive mind, he was soon led to see that the infinite Creator must have had some purpose or plan in the creation of man, which he could not harmonize with his creed. And instead of being led into the system of doctrines which reconciles the purposes and providence of God with man's free agency, he embraced the theory of universal restoration. He next became a leader among the Socialists; and was afterwards promoted to be president of a convention of *spiritual rappers*.

I mention these cases for the purpose of showing that any man, who falls away from Christ, and attempts to build on some other foundation, will soon find his foundation giving way; and he will be left in doubt and fear, his spiritual nature unsatisfied, and his soul in ruins.

As to the favorite and principal charge which these men urge against the Bible,

that it cramps the energies and dwarfs the efforts of men, by leading them to rely on the providence of God, I must say a few words in reply.

Did a reliance upon God supersede the use of means, perhaps the charge might be sustained; but it does not. Such a reliance as the Scriptures enjoin will be accompanied by all suitable exertions. No means, except those which are sinful, are prohibited. And if, after all, our efforts fail, (as they often will,) it is confidence in God which alone sustains us. It is this which stimulates to new exertions. Without it we should sink in utter despair.

Had it not been for his trust in an overruling Providence, the subject of this narrative would have sunk, years ago, into the grave of the suicide. He never lost entirely his confidence in God, and it was this which sustained him and carried him through.

To the blessed Bible, and the religion of

the Bible, man is a thousand-fold more indebted, than to all other influences. Let every young man remember, that those who seek to diminish his confidence in God, and in the word of God, are his worst enemies. Young Fairfield learned this lesson by a terrible experience. I hope my readers may learn it in some easier way.

CHAPTER VII.

The Feelings of Mr. F. during his Declension—The Striving Spirit Returns, and he is led to the Performance of Private Religious Duties—His Views as to a Particular Providence, and Prayer—His Destitute Condition, outwardly—No Employment, no Means of Support, and almost no Religious Privileges—Extracts from his Private Journal—His Mind gradually Enlightened—Remarkable Providences—His Wants always Supplied.

We have said in a previous chapter, that when Mr. F. lost, in the wonderful manner above described, his appetite for strong drink—lost it so entirely as to be incapable of tasting liquor—his mind was, nevertheless, *full* of the most detestable and ruinous errors. We have shown what these errors were — running down from the doctrine of universal restoration, to something as bad in its influence as atheism. The decline began, as we have seen, in the neglect of secret prayer, and the private devotional reading of the Scriptures, and ended—as

far from God and happiness as is possible, on this side hell.

The church, which he once so ardently loved, and for whose prosperity he so often prayed, he now hated, and had really come to believe it his duty to labor for its overthrow. His Bible had long been wholly neglected, and most of its doctrines were repudiated. He agreed with his associates in denying the inspiration of the greater part of the sacred volume.

But a faithful, merciful God would not suffer him very long to remain in such a state—more especially after he became a sober man. Soon after he ceased to drink, the Holy Spirit returned, to operate upon the heart which it had so long forsaken. He began once more to read the Bible; and his attention was particularly drawn to those passages which set forth an overruling Providence, and the readiness of God to hear and answer prayer. These were so powerfully impressed upon him, that he could hardly persuade himself that

he had not discovered a new and important truth of Divine revelation. He began to talk upon the subject, and to write upon it in the newspapers; and so deeply was his mind moved concerning it, that he really thought that all Christians must either view the matter as he did, or renounce the authority of Jesus Christ. He settled down at length upon the belief that an individual desiring any particular object, should humbly seek it of God in prayer; employing at the same time all suitable means, and confidently trusting to God's providence for success. On this conclusion he has rested ever since, and has acted upon it with increasing confidence.

Outwardly, Mr. F. was, at this time, in a miserable condition. He had but little bodily or mental strength. He was without occupation or home, both of which he greatly needed and desired, and for which he began to seek and to pray. And though he was long tried and often disappointed, yet a Divine power was imparted, to keep

alive his faith, and enable him to persevere.

It was so ordered in Providence, that for years after Mr. F. returned to his Bible and his closet, he was not brought under a healthly religious influence. He had not the privilege of hearing five sound evangelical sermons in as many years. The work of recovery was gradually progressing, but it was entirely between God and his own soul. He loved the Word of God, and studied it, and took great delight in the private exercises of religion; and though separated from all outward religious advantages, these exercises were sustained, without flagging, for years. This was the more remarkable, since, instead of receiving a speedy answer to his prayers, and those blessings from God which he expected and sought, these blessings were deferred—kept at a distance—and he was only led out of one trial and trouble into others, which were often greater and sorer than the former. These things were dark and dis-

tressing to him then, though he now clearly sees that they were all ordered in wisdom. As God's people of old were kept forty years in the wilderness, that they might be prepared to enter the promised land; so this young man was tried and proved, that he might be the better fitted for the work assigned him.

We have some account of Mr. Fairfield's difficulties at this time, in a private journal which he kept. Under date of Jan. 16, 1848, he says:—

"Under a sense of my need of Divine direction, I was led months ago—almost immediately after my deliverance from intemperate habits—to look up to God and cry, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Where wilt thou have me to go?' I have continued thus to pray, with more or less of earnestness, ever since, and though I have seen some indications of God's directing providence, yet I am now as much in the dark as ever. I pray much;

I search the Bible daily for direction and strength; but as yet, all is dark. I see no light, no opening in providence for me. Will not God make one? I trust he will, for Jesus' sake."

At another time he writes:—

"If I thought there was nothing for me to do, for God's glory and the good of my fellow-men, in raising them up from ignorance and vice, I should wish to die; and if it were lawful for me to do so, I would pray, 'Lord, take me out of the world.' I am willing to go any where, to do any thing, and to suffer any thing, if I can know for a certainty that it is the will of God. I feel a special desire to do something for the children in our large cities, who are growing up in vice and ignorance, and preparing for ruin here and hereafter. And I now most deliberately and solemnly consecrate myself, with all that I am, and have, or shall ever have,

to the service of God in this way, or in any other way in which he shall please to employ me; promising never to spend time or money to gratify sense or pride, but use all that I am entrusted with for God's glory."

A little later he writes:—

"I am still left in doubt and uncertainty as to what I shall do; or rather, I see nothing at present that I can do. I have prayed long and earnestly, in Christ's name, for direction; and when I think of his promises as to the efficacy of such petitions—so positive, so explicit, and so variously illustrated—and find that there is no answer to my prayers; that they seem to be wholly disregarded; that I am running into new difficulties, and cannot even support myself; while those that blaspheme his name, and do not ask or desire his assistance, prosper in the world and increase in riches;—when I think of these

things, then come suspicions and doubts as to the truth of God's promises, and all is so dark, chaotic, and distracting, that I am ready to sink, and feel at times impatient.

"I think there never was a time when I so forcibly felt the need of God's direction, as now. I must believe that I am not only willing but anxious to do his will—to labor, in such ways as will but please and glorify my God and Saviour. If he will only tell me what he would have me do, even if I could see no present good likely to result from it, still I would labor on, trusting in God to bring forward the harvest in his own time and way. I trust that God will yet hear me, dark as my present prospects are. I know that I am a vile sinner, deserving only to be rejected and cast away; yet for Christ's sake, and his word's sake, he will yet hear me, and show me his salvation.

"I am not conscious that I am regarding iniquity in my heart, so that God cannot hear me. If it be so, I beseech that he

would show it me, and help me to put it away. If it were right, I could pray that God would grant me one answer—one token of Fatherly recognition, even if I must be punished in some other way; so essential is it to the conservation of my faith. O, Eternal Father! hear me, and let me know what thou wouldst have me do. Or if thou hast nothing for me to do, then tell me that thou wouldst have me suffer, or die, or both, for thy glory and man's good. This would be a thousand times preferable to this insupportable uncertainty and darkness. I am ready and willing to suffer and die for the glory of God; but to be shut up in darkness and doubt, crying and praying without any answer, I cannot endure. O, let me hear God's voice, and if it commands me to starve in prison, or die on a scaffold, I am content. But his voice I must hear, or I shall certainly perish."

The above passages were written by Mr.

F. about eighteen months after the cure of his intemperance. It will be remembered that, previous to that event, he had forfeited the confidence and worn out the patience of all his friends. Even his family connections had abandoned him. And though he had now been, for some time, a sober man, yet confidence, under such circumstances, is of slow growth. It is not soon or easily recovered. It will be remembered, too, that Mr. F. had not yet made his peace with the church, or taken any steps towards it.

The Holy Spirit had been striving with him. He had been so far recovered as to love his Bible and his closet; but his prejudices against the church seem not to have been fully overcome. Add to all this his native, shrinking bashfulness and modesty; his unwillingness to obtrude himself upon the notice of others, or to ask their favor; and it will not seem strange that he found himself comparatively alone in the world, without employment or home. It was this which tried him more than any thing else.

It was to be relieved from this embarrassment that he so importunately cried and prayed. He was willing to do any thing for the honor of God, and the good of his fellow-men; but his fellow-men distrusted him—perhaps avoided him. He felt that he had talents, but was constrained to bury them in the earth. Without employment, friends, or home, and apparently shut out from the favor of God, he was left to suffer and cry alone.

About a month later than the date of the last extracts, we find him writing as follows:—

"God has heard my cry; and though he has not yet answered my prayer in the way that I expected, yet he has strengthened my faith, which without an answer must have failed. I have found employment by which I shall be able to support myself; and though it is not an employment to my taste, or which promises to be of much benefit to the world, yet as God has given

it, I gratefully accept of it, and trust it may be to the glory of his name.

"I have been led to think much, of late, of the life to come, and of God as the author of a blissful and glorious immortality. I have been led to think of Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, and of his sufferings and redemption ; and I feel more than ever anxious, if he will permit me, to labor, suffer, or even die for his glory. I know that I have been a vile wretch ; but how it will glorify Christ and honor his word, if he should pardon and save such a rebel as I have been."

Having given the above extracts from the private journal of Mr. F., for the purpose of showing his feelings in that trying period, between his recovery from intemperance and his restoration to the church, we return to the narrative before us. It is Mr. F. speaking of himself, though speaking in the third person.

Gradually, and one at a time, the fatal

errors he had imbibed, were made to give place to the truths of the gospel. Many of these errors were given up with great reluctance. He was loth to believe that he had suffered so much for nothing; that his boasted new light was all darkness, and his newly found truths infernal lies. As to returning to the orthodox church, against which he had felt and expressed so much philanthropic wrath, he felt that he could not and would not do it. When some long discarded truth would come back to his mind, and produce its former impression there, his emotions for the time would nearly overcome him. Then it would be suggested to him that God might ultimately restore him to the church, and even bring him into the ministry. But these suggestions were unwelcome to him, and he would try to put them away.

Mr. F. at this time laid great stress upon his impressions, regarding them almost in the light of revelations. He records some instances which are very remarkable, and

which must have had a great influence upon him :—

"The impression forced itself upon me at a certain time, that an acquaintance of mine, a deaf and dumb man, living some fifty miles off, would die on a particular day. I tried to throw off the unwelcome impression, but could not. It followed me day after day, up to the time set, when in fact, (as we shortly after heard,) he did die. I do not record this as any thing marvelous. Indeed, I have no comments to make upon it, farther than to state the case, and to say that it tended mightily to break down and dissipate my old skeptical theories.

"I mention another instance, not less remarkable. Seeking for employment at one time, I wandered to the town of Wiscasset, (Me.,) where I knew nobody, and had never been before. My pockets were empty, and my spirits depressed; though I had some faith that God had not led me

there for naught. Finding nothing to do, I listlessly entered the shop of a mechanic. The owner of the shop rose up to meet me, and after looking earnestly at me for a moment, said :—

"'It has been deeply impressed upon me, for a short time, that such a man as you would come into my shop, in a destitute condition, and that I must relieve you. Here, take this bank-note, and use it as a gift from God.'

"This man, whom I had never seen before, but who has been my counselor and benefactor since, is one of the most pious, devoted Christians I have ever known. He has often aided me from his purse; but more by his excellent instructions and advice. His religious experience had been a remarkable one, and he had been led to take the same views with myself as to a particular providence, and the efficacy of prayer.

"From this time, though almost perpetually disappointed in my worldly pursuits,

Here take this bank note, and use it as a gift from God P. 110.

and never able to accumulate any property, I rarely suffered for the want of money. Indeed, it often seemed as though I could not suffer. For, whether successful in business or not, my real wants were always provided for, and if I tried to lay up any thing beyond my present wants, it was sure to be taken from me. My case, in this respect, was much like that of the children of Israel in the wilderness. They collected their manna from day to day; but if they laid up more than was necessary for present use, it would decay and perish."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Feelings of Mr. F. Remarkably Revived—Asks Advice of a Minister, but is Disappointed and Discouraged—Repeated Interviews with Rev. Dr. Tappan—Makes a Humble Confession to the Church, and is Restored—His Motives for publishing this Narrative, and Feelings in regard to it.

In the latter part of the year 1849, Mr. F. was favored with a special visitation of the Holy Spirit. One reason why he had avoided a return to the church was, that he dreaded to drink the bitter waters of repentance. But there was nothing bitter or dreadful in the deep repentings which he was now caused to experience. No tongue can describe the operation of the Spirit upon him at this time, or adequately set forth its effects.

He is wont to compare his feelings to those of a little child, who had been lost in a dismal wilderness, in the night, chilled by the cold, pelted by the storms, and

appalled by the howlings of wild beasts,—who had at length been found and restored to its mother's arms, whence it could look back and contemplate the dangers and horrors it had passed.

O, that those damnable theories, heresies, and blasphemies might appear to every young man, as they then appeared to him! And O, that sin of every kind, and those who labor to tempt the young and inexperienced from the narrow way, might appear to others as they at that time seemed to him! And O, that others might have the same views which he then had, of the holy, compassionate, forgiving Saviour!

The Bible was a most precious book to the poor returning wanderer at this time. It was constantly in his pocket, or in his hand. He needed no arguments to convince him of its Divine inspiration, and most bitterly did he reproach himself for ever having questioned its binding authority. Through the business hours of the day, he looked forward, with exceeding

interest, to the time when he could retire to his closet, to read his Bible, and pray, and hold communion with God. He was living at this time, as he had been before, in a wicked, Sabbath-breaking community, cut off from the privilege of attending religious meetings, and of holding intercourse with Christian friends; but he had earnest longings for entire consecration to the service of God, and was anxiously inquiring how, in what place, and by what occupation, he could best promote the interests of his kingdom.

In this state of mind, he took a journey on foot of more than thirty miles, to see and converse with a gospel minister whom he had known in his better days. He wished, first of all, to be restored to the church; and then, in some suitable way and manner, to labor for the honor of God and the good of man. He found the minister at home; but he seems not to have understood young Fairfield's case, and perhaps lacked confidence in the soundness of

his reformation. He advised him to go back, to be industrious and prudent, and try to lay up money. He must engage in some lucrative employment, and endeavor, meanwhile, to make himself useful.

This advice was well intended, but it had a most unhappy effect upon Mr. F. It disappointed him, discouraged him, and fatally interrupted, for a season, that peace of mind which he had enjoyed. He had made some slight advances towards the church with which he first united; but these were not met as he expected. It was evident that a thorough confidence was not restored, and he finally resolved to follow the advice of the minister, and make one more attempt to accumulate property. He also resolved that he would not think more of returning to the church, until, by some marked and striking providence, God should open the way. His faith was a good deal staggered for the time; but he soon found himself returning to his former expectation, and praying that God would

bring him into some situation where he might labor directly for the advancement of his kingdom and glory. But God's time had not yet come, nor did it for more than a year.

In the month of April, 1851, the Rev. Dr. Tappan, of Augusta, spent a Sabbath in Vassalborough, and preached to the church of which Mr. Fairfield had been a member. He was not now a member of this church, having been dismissed and recommended to another in the vicinity, previous to his fall. The church in Vassalborough was at this time in a very low state. It had been for several years without a pastor, and the members that remained were few and disheartened.

Dr. Tappan met Mr. F. and entered into conversation with him in regard to his religious state. He advised him to visit the church to which he had last belonged, make confession of his faults, and be restored. But it was not convenient at

that time for Mr. F. to make such a visit. Besides, he still adhered to his resolution to take no steps towards a reunion with the church, until Providence should distinctly point out the way.

In a subsequent conversation with Dr. Tappan, he was advised at least to *write* to the church to which he belonged, ascertain what his standing was, and have matters set right there. This remark struck him with peculiar force, and he resolved to do immediately as he had been advised. He wrote to the pastor of that church, making a humble confession of his sins, and asking to be restored, and recommended to the church in Vassalborough. This request was granted, and he was restored to the church in Vassalborough just twenty years from the time when he first became a member. He united with this church the first Sabbath in September, 1831, and was restored to it the first Sabbath in September, 1851.

And here his restoration properly ends.

He has told the story both of his *wreck* and his *rescue*. He has told of his gradual departure from God, and of the abyss of ruin into which he at length plunged himself; making shipwreck not only of faith and a good conscience, but of reputation, comfort, and of every other blessing of life.

He has told, in part, the privations he suffered, the agonies he endured, through all this terrible period of backsliding;—*in part*, we say; for no tongue or pen can describe them all. He has also traced the several steps of his recovery;—how, (in answer to prayer, as he believes), his appetite for strong drink was suddenly and entirely taken away;—how the Divine Spirit then visited him, and gradually enlightened him, displacing one error and prejudice after another, drawing him first to his Bible and his closet, strengthening his faith, reviving his hope, and at length bringing him back, by a long and painful pilgrimage, to the bosom of that church in

which he first publicly consecrated himself to God.

A thousand interesting incidents have indeed been omitted; but enough has been said to illustrate the truth and faithfulness of God, and furnish important lessons to men—more especially to the young.

To the subject of this narrative, many portions of it are inexpressibly painful—reviving in his soul the most dreadful recollections. It was long before he could bring himself to think of its publication. But a sense of duty impels him, and he dares not withhold it any longer. "I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble." (Ps. 66 : 13). This vow he long ago made to God, and so clear and striking have been the indications of Providence respecting it, that he can but humbly commit it to God, hoping and praying that good may come out of it.

Dear reader, in the affecting story of the rich man and Lazarus, recorded in the six-

teenth chapter of Luke, you remember the rich man desired that Lazarus might be sent to warn his brethren on the earth, lest they also should come to that place of torment. Now why did he not ask permission to go on this errand of mercy himself? Why? I cannot pretend to assign all the reasons; but my own experience leads me to think that this may have been one: *The pride of his heart forbade it.*

For I know, that no amount of misery or depth of degradation, can subdue or diminish the pride of the human heart. In the hour of my greatest misery, when my tongue was literally parched by the agony of my soul, I would on no consideration have come from under the feet of Satan, where I lay, to warn a single one of my fellow-men. My pride, which rose and raved with the increase of my misery, utterly forbade it. So impotent is mere suffering to humble and subdue the heart of man.

But when the Holy Spirit, gentle as

dew in its operations, touched that proud heart of mine, it began to melt in humble penitence, and I longed for the opportunity to warn my fellow-men. And I knew not how I could more effectually do it, than by detailing the circumstances of my own experience. 'Whoso readeth, let him understand.'

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Fairfield's Concluding Remarks—Address to Young Christians, warning them against the Neglect of Private Religious Duties—Against Dangerous Books, and the Ambition to be thought *Liberal*—Address to Young Men in behalf of Temperance—Address to Backsliders, calling them to Immediate Repentance.

In conclusion, there are three classes of persons to whom I am anxious to say a few words. And first, to *the young Christian.* Permit one, who once stood where you now stand, and who thought it impossible that he could ever fall into open sin, so as to dishonor his Saviour, and bring disgrace and ruin on himself, to offer a few suggestions by way of warning. I would earnestly warn you to beware of the *first* temptation to remissness or negligence in your religious duties. If you find your interest in secret prayer, in the word of God, and in a careful self-examination diminishing, it is time for you to be seriously

alarmed. You may deem it a small matter, as I once did, to neglect these duties occasionally; but depend upon it, the second omission will seem of less account to you than the first, and the third less than the second, and so on, until they are entirely neglected. It is only by sad experience that you can know the power and the subtle artifices of your great adversary; and if he can succeed in keeping you from your closet, he is sure of his prey. Resist him, then, steadfastly and perseveringly. He will not be discouraged by a few repulses. He will approach you at different times, and in those ways in which he will be most likely to succeed.

Beware of bad books. And by bad books I mean not merely immoral and infidel works, but the most of those which come to us in beautiful binding, and under the fascinating guise of fiction. I do not say that persons should never read works of fiction. Such works are sometimes instructive and useful, giving a true repre-

sentation of life and nature. A genius, great and good, who is able to sound the very depths of human nature, being unfettered by the truth of narrative and history, can place his characters in such situations as to bring out any feeling or disposition he may choose, and thus make his story instructive and profitable.

Still, there are books enough which are *true* and *useful;* and to these, I think, the young should chiefly confine themselves. If novels must be read, I do believe that they should be deferred, until Christian principles and habits are firmly established. I speak from sad experience on this point; as the reader of the foregoing narrative will recollect. Novels were one of the baits of the great adversary, by which he lured me into his net, and well-nigh accomplished my destruction.

Have no ambition or desire to be thought "*liberal* Christians." This honeyed phrase is used to signify almost any thing—as the liberal Universalist, or the liberal infidel.

When you find that your liberality is tending to lead you away from your closet, or is diminishing your interest in God's word and ordinances, renounce it, as you would a deadly poison. If you have been truly converted, I need say little more on this point. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life;" and those who strictly walk in this way, will be very likely to be called *illiberal*. Wo unto you, when these very liberal men speak well of you. The Christian's life is one of warfare. Now you may escape this warfare, and glide smoothly along on the current of worldly favor; but where will the smooth current carry you? *Where will you go?*

The salvation of *your own soul* is a great work; but in your endeavors for this, you must never forget your obligations to care for others. Millions upon millions of your fellow-men are yet in total ignorance of the gospel. They know not that the Son of God has been manifested

in the flesh, and made an atonement for the sins of men. To extend the knowledge of this blessed Saviour is a glorious work; and a glorious reward awaits those who faithfully engage in it. But what will be the situation of those, in the last great day, who have no compassion for perishing souls, lying together in the prison-house of sin and death? "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it not to me."

The next class to which I wish to say something consists of *young men*, who are not yet pledged to total abstinence. Of course, you do not think yourselves in any danger of becoming drunkards. It was so with me. I felt that there might be danger in the case of others. But though I saw around me miserable wretches, who were once as well guarded as myself, and flattered themselves in the same security; still, I felt sure that *I* could control myself — that *I* should keep on the side of safety. And

yet I did become a drunkard ;—and *so may you.*

But I would appeal to another motive, aside from that of personal danger ; and that is, your obligations to care and labor for the good of others. This is not the stage of our endless existence in which we can look for, or innocently enjoy, rest. Rest from labor, the true friends of God and man will inscribe only on their tombstones. It is a noble sight to see a young man resolving, in the strength of Christ, and in the exercise of the powers which God has given him, that he will *be* something and *do* something in the world, and not slide through it into oblivion, leaving scarcely a trace behind. Of such it can only be said, that they lived, drew sustenance from the earth, and dying, nourished earth again ; and had they been used for compost, they could hardly have been more useless. Let the young who read these pages endeavor to live to better purpose. For their own safety, and the good of others, let them

set the example of entire abstinence from all that intoxicates. Then can they, with a sober brain, a steady hand, and a bold, unflinching importunity, labor to rescue others from that yawning gulf which is perpetually swallowing up so many of the beloved youth of our land.

Finally, I would urge the backslider, in whatever stage he may be of that dismal path which leads him away from God and peace, instantly to stop and retrace his steps. If you have ever experienced the joy of pardoned sin, and the renewing influence of the Spirit upon your soul, you certainly know that there is no peace or comfort for you in your present state. Notwithstanding all your endeavors to quiet conscience, and allay your guilty fears, you have principles abiding with you—sighs, groans, and occasional aspirations—that will not suffer you to rest. What would be your feelings, if the holy and compassionate Jesus were now to look upon you, as he did upon Peter, in his backsliding? Would you

not, like him, go out from your sinful associates, and weep bitterly ?

Yet, it may be, the dread of that very bitterness—the wormwood and the gall—is what keeps you back from Christ. You dread to turn, and look him who died for you in the face. But of that bitter cup you *must* drink, sooner or later, and the longer you put it from you, the more bitter it will become. You *must* meet your injured Redeemer, either at the mercy-seat in this world, or at the judgment-seat in the world to come.

I very well know with what dreadful thoughts your souls are at times afflicted. For several years after I became a church-member, I constantly read "The Christian Mirror," (a religious paper, published at Portland,) with interest and profit. When farthest away from God and happiness, confined with maniacs in a hospital, I accidentally met with a copy, and read it. *It stunned my soul to its lowest depths.* I resolved that, when I went out, I would

read the Mirror weekly, and see if it would not be the means of my recovery. But I forgot and broke my resolution. So when I witnessed a communion service in the church of which I had been a happy member, O, who can conceive of the misery I endured! But there is no other way back, except that of repentance; and if you persist, destruction, you well know, is before you.

It may be that *pride* is the principal thing which keeps you away from Christ. You have enlisted, perhaps, as I did, with the enemies of religion, in open opposition to the cause of truth, and you are loth to give up your liberal views, and acknowledge that your boasted progress has been only from light to darkness, from good to evil. But remember that God says of those who are willing, in their sufferings, to flee to him for help, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." This was a glorious promise to me, when in the state of mind I have

just described. God, and he alone, has power to save, and thanks be to his name, he is ready to do it; and the recovery of a wandering, backslidden child, will be glorious to himself. "Return, then, O, backsliding children, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep mine anger forever." (Jer. 3 : 12.) "I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him." (Hos. 14 : 4.)

CHAPTER X.

The Concluding Period of Mr. Fairfield's Life—His Sympathy for the Poor—A Temperance Lecturer—His Connection with the Seminary at Bangor—His Ministerial Labors and Successes at Bristol, Me.—His Death—A Dark Providence.

Up to this point, we have had the manuscript of Mr. Fairfield for our guide. It has been thoroughly revised, some few things have been omitted, and the structure of the sentences has been often changed; but the sense, the sentiment, has in all cases been retained. The narrative is *his* narrative; the instructions, the counsels, the warnings and exhortations are all his. It remains that we complete the narrative of his life, and add such reflections of our own as the case requires.

Soon after his leaving the Community, and his remarkable recovery from habits of intemperance — a recovery accomplished,

not only without his agency, but apparently against his will—the Holy Spirit, he tells us, began specially to strive with him. He began to have serious thoughts and impressions; and, taught as he had been, and still was, in the furnace of affliction, he began to feel for the woes of others.

"As I passed, in my poverty, by the houses of the rich, and saw their cheerful lights through the windows, and other visible marks of comfort and competence, then it was that I felt for the wretched poor, whose shivering frames the cold wind pierces, and who have nothing for the gnawings of hunger to feed upon but their very lives. The impression was so deep upon me, that nothing but death can ever remove it."

It was under impressions such as these, that Mr. F. sought and prayed for some employment, (as we have seen in his

journal), where he might relieve the distresses of others. He would gladly have pleaded the cause of poor, starving children in our great cities, or labored in any other way for the removal of human distress and want, that God should appoint. It was under the like impression—pity for the poor, helpless inebriate, whose woes and sorrows he so well understood—that he became, after a time, a public lecturer upon temperance.

In the winter of 1849, we find, from his journal, that he lectured in Hopkinton, in Milford, in both parishes in Medway, in Rockville, in Pawtucket, and at other places in Massachusetts. How his lectures were received, we cannot say. One of them, delivered (as the title informs us), "in Pawtucket, and in several other places," was published, and is now before me. It is forcibly written, after the manner of the Washingtonians, detailing, at length, his own terrible experience as an inebriate, and warning others to save themselves from the

same destruction, by the only sure path that is open to them — the pledge of total and eternal abstinence. We find also among his papers, a very able and instructive lecture on the different causes and forms of insanity; but whether he ever delivered it in public, we cannot say.

The steps of his recovery to God and happiness, from the great sins into which he plunged himself in early life, have been detailed in the foregoing narrative. They were slow and gradual, as he says—step by step—one error and prejudice being given up after another—until, on the first Sabbath in September, 1851, he was restored, a happy member, to the church which he first joined just twenty years before.

In the summer of 1852, Mr. F. came, by the advice and assistance of friends, to Bangor, and commenced studying, with a view to the ministry. In the autumn of the same year he entered the Seminary,

and continued a member of it two years. He was known in the seminary as a diligent student; also as a man of genius and of deep piety. He was modest in his deportment, not forward to speak, but whenever he did speak, was listened to with much attention. His written performances were able and interesting. During the latter half of his senior year, he frequently preached in the vicinity of Bangor, and always with good acceptance.

With the exception of occasional seasons of depression, he seems to have been in a happy frame of mind, during his residence at Bangor; for he felt that he was in the path of duty, and was preparing for an employment altogether congenial to his feelings and hopes. It was feared, however, by those who knew him best, that his nervous system, naturally delicate, had been fatally shattered by those scenes of intemperance and misery, through which he had passed. He had violated, fearfully, the laws of his physical being; and for

such violation there has been no atonement, and there is no forgiveness.

He left the Seminary in the summer of 1854, and soon after commenced his ministerial labors in Bristol, Me., where he continued till his death in the following summer. Of the regard in which he was held by his people, and the success of his labors among them, I have the following account from his successor, Rev. T. A. Merrill :—

"Mr. Fairfield secured the respect and the sympathy of the more intelligent and thoughtful portion of the community. He was rapidly gaining a very strong hold upon the people. His preaching was of a searching character, dealing much with the consciences of his hearers, and faithfully and skillfully applying the word of God to them. His sermons were full of strong, healthy nutriment for the mind and heart; though not written always in a style best adapted to please the popular ear. His

manner was such as to carry the conviction to all that he was a *true* minister of Jesus Christ, sincere, earnest, humble, godly. It was a frequent remark among Christians, that in prayer he seemed to have 'power with God.'

"He took great interest in visiting the sick and the afflicted. Two very intelligent young ladies died in joyful hope—one of them just before, and the other a little after, his death. Through his faithful efforts and fervent prayers, both of them were brought to see their guilt and danger, and to commit themselves into the hands of Christ. Under his brief labors, some ten or twelve persons were led to indulge a hope in the mercy of God."

These ten or twelve hopeful converts were the first fruits of a revival of religion, springing up under the faithful ministry of Mr. Fairfield. It soon appeared, however, that the increased labor and excitement

incident to the revival, were too much for his enfeebled nervous system. He first faltered, and then broke down entirely; and after lingering until the 11th day of July, 1855, he died.

During his sickness, (owing in part to the state of his nerves, but more, probably, to the remedies which were administered), he was inclined to converse but little. He became lethargic, stupid, and for several of the last days almost unconscious, in which state he quietly passed away. He had delivered his message while in health. He could say but little for God or religion in his sickness.

"A very large assembly," says Mr. Merrill, "were drawn together at his funeral, which was attended in the meeting-house, where he had preached the gospel with so much power. The services were conducted, and a sermon preached, by the Rev. E. G. Carpenter, of Newcastle. He was interred in the village burial-ground at

Bristol. A neat stone, with his name and age inscribed, marks the place where he was laid. Never was a deceased minister more sincerely mourned for by a people, than Mr. Fairfield. They speak of him now as a *godly man*, a *man of faith*, and remember him with great respect and affection."

The righteous Providence, which so arrested him, when bent upon self-destruction—had conquered at a stroke his great enemy, the love of strong drink — and having done this, had gradually restored him to the confidence of friends, and his standing in the church, and had even honored him, putting him into the ministry ;—and now, almost as soon as he begins to exercise his ministry, and find success in it in the conversion of souls, he is smitten down and taken away. A dark, mysterious providence, truly ! And yet we know that it was ordered in infinite wisdom and goodness. The reasons of it

have been made plain ere this to the tried sufferer; and they will ere long be understood perfectly by surviving friends. "What I do, thou knowest not now, but *thou shalt know hereafter*."

CHAPTER XI.

Concluding Remarks by the Editor—Those by Mr. F. approved—The Question of Mr. Fairfield's Conversion considered—His Case teaches us both the Goodness and the Severity of God—It also teaches the Power of the Gospel to Recover, to Elevate, and Save—Mr. F. tried Every thing else in Vain—The Value of his Experiment, and of the Testimony borne by it, to the Excellence of the Gospel.

THE remarks with which Mr. Fairfield concludes his narrative (chap. ix,) are exceedingly appropriate and important. I refer to them here, not to repeat them, nor to make additions to them, but rather to express my approbation of them, and connect my counsels with his own.

Young Christians *should* learn, from his sad fall, to be watchful and prayerful, and to resist (as he says), the *first* temptation to neglect the private duties of religion. They should early find out their easily-besetting sins, and be specially watchful

in regard to them. It is at these points that Satan will make his most vigorous onset. At these, therefore, let him be resisted, and effectually driven back.

One of the most hazardous states of mind which a young Christian can indulge, is that of *self-security*—a feeling *strong in himself*. This was one of the errors of young Fairfield. He felt as though *he* could control himself; *he* could keep on the side of safety; *he* should never fall into sin, and bring a reproach upon the cause of Christ. And yet *he did fall*. And so will any other young Christian fall, who comes to feel secure and strong in himself. "When I am weak," says Paul, "then am I strong." And the converse of this proposition is equally true: "When I am strong, then am I weak." Or to express the sense of the whole in plainer terms: When the Christian *feels* weak—weak in himself; then is he strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. But when he feels strong and secure in

himself, then is his strength weakness, and his fancied security is full of peril. "Let him that *thinketh* he standeth take heed lest he fall."

The counsels of Mr. F. to young men on the subject of *temperance*, and to *backsliders* from the ways of the Lord, are equally pertinent and important. "Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." There is no safety for any man, young or old, but in *entire abstinence*. No young man means to become a drunkard; and yet a great many do become such. "*Touch not, taste not, handle not;*"—let this be the motto inscribed on every article containing the poison—on every eye that sees it, and the soul that desires it; and the world is safe. The generation of drunkards will soon be among the things that were.

And to the man who has already fallen—fallen foully, and to human view hopelessly—the example of Mr. F. is full of encouragement. Who ever declined to greater

lengths than he? Who was ever in a more miserable and desperate condition? And yet, by the grace of God, he was recovered. He was restored, as we trust, to the Divine favor, and to confidence and usefulness among his fellow-men. His upward path was, indeed, long and perilous—much longer than it should have been. It was deeply humiliating, and in some of its stages rugged and painful. Yet he took it; he persevered in it; and it led him out to safety; it led him up to pardon and peace. His example, then, as I said, is full of encouragement to others, in like circumstances. Let them not despair, and rush on to perdition; but let them "return unto the Lord who will have mercy upon them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

But I need not dwell longer on these topics, which Mr. F. has treated so well. One of the first questions suggested by the narrative over which we have passed is this: what are we to think of Mr. Fair-

field's case, previous to his fall? Was he really converted, as he supposed, in early life; and is he to be regarded, in his subsequent wanderings, in the light of a backslider? Or are we to suppose that he was not truly converted, until his restoration?

After all that I know of the case, both from the narrative and from my acquaintance with the man, I am constrained to believe that *he was converted in early life.* His wanderings were indeed long and fearful; and yet, through the whole course of them, I am constrained to regard him, not as an apostate, but a backslider. My reasons for this opinion are the following.

1. I am sure that this was the opinion of Mr. Fairfield, who certainly knew himself better than others could know him, and who was entirely capable, in the latter part of his life, of forming an intelligent judgment in the case. In his narrative he speaks—(as he always did in conversa-

tion)—of his early conversion as *his conversion*—and the only proper conversion of which he was ever the subject. His experience in after life was, as he thought, but a revival, in higher degrees, of his impressions and feelings.

2. His exercises, at the time of his early conversion, and for years afterwards, were, so far as we can judge, highly satisfactory. He had deep convictions of sin; he had a spiritual apprehension of Christ, as the great deliverer from sin and death; and he put his whole trust in Christ, enjoyed his presence and his love, and seems to have walked closely and consistently with him. Few young Christians, I think, are so scrupulously exact in the performance of private religious duties, and so strictly watchful against temptation, as was young Fairfield, at this interesting period of his life.

3. The experience of Mr. F., through the whole season of his declension, was not exactly that of a hardened reprobate, who

had never known the truth, but rather that of a wandering soul, who was sinning against good principles, and occasional good impulses and aspirations, which were too deeply implanted to be ever eradicated. Thus we see him trying to be a Universalist, but never fully succeeding. The doctrines of depravity, and of atonement by the blood of Christ, he repeatedly tells us, were so inwrought into the very texture of his being, that he could never renounce them. When he spoke, as he sometimes did, of hating evangelical religion, he had an abiding conviction of its truth. While he indulged his prejudices against his former religious friends and the church, he remembered the comforts of the old prayer-meetings, and yearned for their renewal. The witnessing of a communion season during the period of his declension, and even the sight of his old friend, the Christian Mirror, awakened feelings which almost overpowered him. In short, his experience, even in the lowest depths to

which he descended, was not that, as I said, of a hardened reprobate, but rather that of a wandering, deluded soul, who could not forget his former comforts,—his Father's bosom, and his Saviour's love. And hence the intensity, often, of his mental sufferings. I suppose he suffered inexpressibly more than a hardened sinner would have done in like circumstances ; for he had to contend against, not only reason, and conscience, and the word of God, but the ineradicable impulses of Christian principle and feeling, and the strivings of the Holy Spirit.

I am one of those who believe that the true Christian never so falls away, as to become like the impenitent soul. His holy purposes, though strangely wandered from, are not utterly renounced. His holy desires, though for the time smothered and concealed, are not entirely quenched. He sins, but not as he once did, with his whole heart. He cannot *so* sin, because he is born of God. (I. John 3 : 9). And this

seems to have been the case with Mr. Fairfield, during the dark period of his declension. He fell far away, very far. He persisted in his wanderings longer than backsliders commonly do. Satan desired to have him, and did have him, to sift him as wheat. But the implanted seed of religious principle and affection, was not lost. It remained alive within him, and, through the abounding grace of God, it at length sprung up, and brought forth precious fruit.

The case of Mr. F., which has been detailed in the foregoing narrative, should impress upon us both *the goodness and the severity* of God. Here is goodness displayed, in the early conversion of this young man, and in the abundant grace which seems, for a time, to have been bestowed upon him; — and goodness, more especially, in bearing with him through the long, dark period of his declension, and in ultimately raising him from his state of sin, and restoring him to that Divine love

and favor which he had so richly forfeited. This was little less than a miracle of mercy —a most illustrious display of long-suffering goodness and grace. And so the subject of this memoir ever afterwards regarded it. He never tired in speaking of that wondrous love, which appeared for him when he was a scoffing inebriate, sunk to the lowest depths of degradation and misery, and led him back to holiness and peace.

But while God displayed, in this instance, such astonishing goodness, his goodness was not unmingled with severity. Mr. F. never entirely recovered from the effects of his intemperance, and never could. His sins, we trust, were forgiven, so far as regards the proper penalty of the Divine law, but their physical consequences remained upon him, and brought him to an early grave. The injury he had inflicted upon his nervous system was incurable; and so soon as he was brought into circumstances of peculiar interest, labor,

and responsibility, he faltered and fell. Behold, therefore, in this instance, as in a thousand others, the *goodness* and the *severity* of God—goodness, in forgiving and saving the returning soul; severity, in the natural, physical consequences of indulged sin, running on and bringing forth their appropriate fruits in debility and death.

We learn further, from the case of Mr. F., *the power of the gospel*, and that alone, to recover, to elevate and save. This is a theme on which the subject of the narrative before us loved to dwell. Very often, in conversation, have we heard him refer to it, quoting, with peculiar emphasis, the declaration of Paul: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. 1 : 16.)

In his search after happiness, during the dark period of his declension, Mr. F. sought out and tried almost every thing, aside from the gospel. He tried the intox-

icating cup. He tried several forms of Universalism. He tried Swedenborgianism, and Fourierism. He tried the society of those who sneered and scoffed at the religion of the Bible, and essayed to be a scoffer with them; and what was the consequence? Did he find the happiness he sought? Let his own recorded experience answer. He often thought that he was making progress, and should soon reach the object of his pursuit; whereas he was constantly waxing worse and worse, becoming more and more degraded and wretched, until not only his former friends, but his wicked associates despaired of him, and thrust him from them; until he was brought to seek a refuge, repeatedly, in a mad-house, and in one instance, attempted to end his sorrows with his life.

And in this depth of misery, what was it that raised him up, and restored him to life and peace? It was *the gospel of Christ*—that blessed gospel from which he

had wickedly departed, but which he could not utterly renounce. When all other expedients had failed, he was led to return to his first love — he began to do his first works. By a rugged but wholesome path, he came back from his broken cisterns to the fountain of living waters; and then he could say, with an emphasis unknown before, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The gospel, and that alone, "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

God raises up individuals, from time to time, to bear testimony before the world to this great fact in their own experience. Such was Solomon, in ancient times. He had abundant means for pursuing all earthly sources of enjoyment, and he resolved to try them on the widest scale. And having made one experiment after another, and found them all "vanity and vexation of spirit," he comes out, at last, with the grand conclusion: "Fear God,

and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

And so it was in a smaller and more private way with Harrison Fairfield. It may be said of him, as it was of Solomon in early life, that "he loved the Lord exceedingly, and walked in his ways;" but Satan was permitted to gain an advantage over him, and led him astray. In his wanderings, like Solomon, he turned first to this thing for happiness, and then to that, and then to a third, and a fourth, until, wearied with disappointment and defeat, he returns to his Bible and the gospel, and finds rest to his troubled soul.

To make this experiment—to bear this testimony to the gospel—was undoubtedly one of the ends for which Harrison Fairfield was raised up. He expected to do much good as a minister of Christ; but in this he was disappointed. His race was soon run. His career of usefulness, when he had once fairly entered upon it, was short. He was permitted to gather in

some precious first fruits, and then was called to lay down the sickle. A protracted ministry was not the means of usefulness allotted to him.

Still he did not live in vain. He was raised up, as I said, for another purpose. He was to bear a testimony such as, without his distressing experience, he could not bear, to the power and excellence of the gospel, as the only deliverer from sin and death. And that the value of the experiment might not be confined to a narrow circle, he was led to prepare the narrative above given, appropriately entitled by himself, "The *Wreck* and the *Rescue*,"—the Wreck accomplished through the delusive suggestions of error and of sin; the Rescue, by the power of God's holy truth, set home by the accompanying influences of his Spirit.

And as the preparation of this Memoir—so painful and humiliating in some of its aspects to the writer—may be regarded as among the most important works of his

life; so the editing of it, and giving it to the world, is but the carrying out of the same design. Such, at least, have been the leading motive and object of the editor. He was unwilling that a narrative, prepared under such circumstances, and for such an end, and designed by the author for publication, should be lost. He was unwilling that the important lessons contained in it, and the convincing testimony borne by it, should not be *read out* before the world. The Lord grant that these lessons of instruction and warning may be duly heeded; and that this striking testimony to the power and value of the gospel, may not be borne in vain.

THE END.

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